## **CLAIMS**

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What is claimed is:

1. A method for the distribution of fonts, the method comprising:

a font consumer requesting a font from a font provider;

the font provider accessing subscription information for the font consumer;

the font provider sending the requested font to the font consumer depending on the subscription information; and

the font consumer receiving the requested font and providing the requested font to an application.

2. A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the step of the font consumer requesting the font from the font provider comprises:

the font consumer accessing a web site of the font provider; the font consumer logging onto the web site; and the font consumer identifying the requested font.

3. A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the step of the font provider accessing the subscription information for the font consumer comprises:

accessing a subscriber database;

looking up the font consumer in the subscriber database; and reading font privileges associated with the font consumer.

- 4. A method as claimed in claim 3, wherein the step of the font provider accessing the subscription information for the font consumer further comprises debiting an account of the font consumer.
  - 5. A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the step of the font provider sending the requested font to the font consumer comprises:

the font provider encrypting the font prior to transmission to the font consumer.

6. A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the step of the font provider sending the requested font to the font consumer comprises:

the font provider giving privilege information with the font, the privileges information defining approved uses for the requested font by the font consumer.

7. A method as claimed in claim 6, wherein the step of the font provider sending the requested font to the font consumer comprises:

the font provider giving lifetime information with the font, the lifetime information defining a time period for which the font consumer is authorized to use the font.

8. A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the step of the font provider sending the requested font to the font consumer comprises:

the font provider giving lifetime information with the font, the lifetime information defining a time period for which the font consumer is authorized to use the font.

- 9. A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the step of the font consumer receiving the requested font and providing the requested font to an application comprises: installing the font on the font consumer.
- 10. A method as claimed in claim 1, wherein the step of the font consumer receiving the requested font and providing the requested font to the application comprises: installing the font in random access memory of the font consumer.
- 11. A font manager for a computer, comprising:

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- a font request interceptor receiving demands for fonts from applications running on the computer;
- a font retriever for requesting the demanded fonts from a remote font provider if the demanded fonts are not installed on the computer;
- a font installer for receiving and installing the demanded fonts; and
- a font tracker for controlling use of the demanded fonts by the applications in response to privilege information received from the remote font provider.

12. A font manager as claimed in claim 11, wherein the font retriever provides subscription information to the remote font provider.

- 13. A font manager as claimed in claim 11, wherein the font retriever accesses a web site of the font provider and logs onto the web site to be identified by the font provider.
- 14. A font manager as claimed in claim 11, wherein the font retriever decrypts the demanded font.

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- 15. A font manager as claimed in claim 11, wherein the font tracker monitors use of the demanded font to enforce use of the demanded fonts consistent with the received privilege information.
- 16. A font manager as claimed in claim 11, wherein the font tracker disables the demanded after expiry of a time period defined by the privilege information.
- 17. A font manager as claimed in claim 11, wherein the font installer installs the demanded font into random access memory of the font consumer.
- 18. A method for the distribution of fonts, the method comprising:
  - a font consumer requesting a font from a font provider and providing payment for the font:
  - the font provider sending the requested font to the font consumer along with a license for the font consumer that enables the font consumer to use the font for a specified period of time; and
  - the font consumer receiving the requested font and providing the requested font to an application for the specified period of time.
- 19. A method as claimed in claim 18, further comprising the font provider accessing subscription information for the font consumer.
- 20. A method as claimed in claim 18, wherein the step of the font consumer requesting the font from the font provider comprises:

the font consumer accessing a web site of the font provider; the font consumer logging onto the web site; and the font consumer identifying the requested font.

21. A method as claimed in claim 18, wherein the step of the font provider sending the requested font to the font consumer comprises:

the font provider encrypting the font prior to transmission to the font consumer.

22. A method as claimed in claim 18, wherein the step of the font provider sending the requested font to the font consumer comprises:

the font provider giving privilege information with the font, the privileges information defining approved uses for the requested font by the font consumer.

23. A method as claimed in claim 22, wherein the step of the font provider sending the requested font to the font consumer comprises:

the font provider giving lifetime information with the font, the lifetime information defining a time period for which the font consumer is authorized to use the font.

24. A method as claimed in claim 18, wherein the step of the font provider sending the requested font to the font consumer comprises:

the font provider giving lifetime information with the font, the lifetime information defining the specified time period for which the license is valid.

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